

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all previous claims, and listings of claims, in the application:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A bearing seat ~~of a ball joint~~ provided in a socket with an opening, ~~with having~~ a spherical sliding surface that ~~for~~ rotatably ~~holds~~ holding an approximately globular ball portion of a ball stud arranged in the socket and wherein the bearing seat has a latitudinal direction and a longitudinal direction and an opening ~~communicating for approximately coinciding~~ with the opening in the socket, comprising:

a plurality of housing concave portions that are along first and second adjacent longitudinal direction positions on the sliding surface in a manner opposed to an outer circumferential surface of the ball portion for housing a lubricant; wherein

the housing concave portions comprise:

a plurality of first dimples respectively arranged apart from each other so as to form at least one tier along tier along the latitudinal direction, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas approximately equal to each other; and

a plurality of second dimples including:

a plurality of small dimples respectively arranged apart from each other along the latitudinal direction at positions of a side opposite the opening with respect to the at least one tier of the first dimples, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas approximately equal to each other; and

a plurality of large dimples respectively arranged apart from each other along the latitudinal direction at positions of a side of the opening with respect to the tier of the first small dimples, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas larger than those of the first dimples and approximately equal to each other.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The bearing seat of a ball joint as set forth in Claim 1, wherein

of the first dimples and the second dimples, mutually adjacent ones are different in a latitudinal direction position and a longitudinal direction position from each other.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The bearing seat of a ball joint as set forth in Claim 1, wherein ~~for the housing concave portions~~, the first dimples are arranged so as to form a line apart from each other along the longitudinal direction, and

wherein the second dimples respectively having opening areas different from those of the first dimples and are arranged apart from each other so as to form a line along the longitudinal direction at positions adjacent in the latitudinal direction to the first dimples.

Claim 4 (Cancelled).

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A bearing seat ~~of a ball joint~~ provided in a socket with an opening, ~~with a ball stud, having~~ a spherical sliding surface adapted to ~~for~~ rotatably ~~hold~~ holding an

approximately globular ball portion of ~~the~~ a ball stud ~~to be~~ arranged in ~~this~~ the socket and an opening ~~communicating~~ for approximately coinciding with the opening in the socket comprising:

a plurality of housing concave portions that are on the sliding surface in a manner opposed to an outer circumferential surface of the ball portion, and the opened areas are adapted to house a lubricant, wherein

the housing concave portions comprise:

a plurality of first dimples respectively arranged apart from each other so as to form at least one tier along the latitudinal direction, a line along the longitudinal direction and form, having opening areas approximately equal to each other, ~~at least one tier along the latitudinal direction, and~~ opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas approximately equal to each other; and

a plurality of second dimples including:

a plurality of small dimples respectively arranged apart from each other along the latitudinal direction at positions of a side opposite the spherical sliding opening with respect to the at least one tier of ~~these~~ the first dimples, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas approximately equal to each other; and

a plurality of large dimples respectively arranged apart from each other along the latitudinal direction at positions of a side of the opening with respect to the tier of the first small dimples, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas larger than those of the first dimples and approximately equal to each other.

Claim 6 (Cancelled).

Claim 7 (Cancelled).

Claim 8 (Cancelled).

Claim 9 (Cancelled).

Claim 10 (New) A ball joint comprising:

a socket with an opening portion;

a bearing seat provided in the socket; and

a ball stud having:

an approximately globular ball portion rotatably held in the bearing seat and housed in the socket; and

a stud portion provided in a protruding condition from this ball portion and to be inserted through the opening portion,

wherein the bearing seat includes:

a spherical sliding surface rotatably holding the ball portion and has a latitudinal direction and a longitudinal direction;

an opening approximately coinciding with the opening portion; and

a plurality of housing concave portions that are opened on the sliding surface in a manner opposed to an outer circumferential surface of the ball portion and house a lubricant, wherein the plurality of housing concave portions includes:

a plurality of first dimples respectively arranged apart from each other so as to form at least one tier along the latitudinal direction, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas approximately equal to each other; and

a plurality of second dimples including:

a plurality of small dimples respectively arranged apart from each other along the latitudinal direction at positions of a side opposite the opening with respect to the at least one tier of the first dimples, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas approximately equal to each other; and

a plurality of large dimples respectively arranged apart from each other along the latitudinal direction at positions of a side of the opening with respect to the tier of the first dimples, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas larger than those of the small dimples and approximately equal to each other.

Claim 11 (New) A ball joint comprising:

a socket with an opening portion;

a bearing seat provided in the socket; and

a ball stud having:

an approximately globular ball portion rotatably held in this bearing seat and housed in the socket; and

a stud portion provided in a protruding condition from this ball portion and to be inserted through the opening portion,

wherein the bearing seat includes:

a spherical sliding surface that rotatably holds a ball portion and has a latitudinal direction and a longitudinal direction;

an opening communicated with the opening portion; and

a plurality of housing concave portions that are opened on the sliding surface in a manner opposed to an outer circumferential surface of the ball portion and house a lubricant, wherein the plurality of housing concave portions includes:

a plurality of first dimples respectively arranged apart from each other so as to form at least one tier along the latitudinal direction, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas approximately equal to each other; and

a plurality of second dimples including:

a plurality of small dimples respectively arranged apart from each other along the latitudinal direction at positions of a side opposite the opening with respect to the at least one tier of the first dimples, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas approximately equal to each other; and

a plurality of large dimples respectively arranged apart from each other along the latitudinal direction at positions of a side of the opening with respect to the tier of the first dimples, opened in approximately circular forms, and having opening areas larger than those of the small dimples and approximately equal to each other,

wherein the first dimples and second dimples having the small dimples and large dimples form a line along the longitudinal direction.